

Letters

Correction

EyeNet's February Academy Notebook, p. 51, states that **Mark S. Humayun, MD, PhD**, was awarded the National Medal of Technology and Innovation on Jan. 22. Due to inclement weather, the ceremony was canceled. It will be rescheduled for later this year—the date has not yet been set.

Get Started in Advocacy—Here's How

As busy ophthalmologists, we might sometimes forget that our professional obligations extend beyond the exam chair and the operating room. One of these is to advocate for the betterment of patient care and the advancement of the field. If your role as an advocate for the profession of ophthalmology is not well defined, you should attend the Academy's Mid-Year Forum (MYF) April 13-16, including Congressional Advocacy Day (CAD) April 13-14, in Washington, D.C.

Your attendance at CAD will provide a unique opportunity to share with lawmakers your professional experiences and to talk about the regulatory barriers that impede the delivery of quality care to our patients. As physicians, we took an oath to "do no harm." I challenge you to go beyond your professional oath and advance the lives of our patients and the future of our profession.

Details for registration can be found at www.aao.org/myf.

*Courtney Elise Bovee, MD
Boston*

Young Ophthalmologist Advocacy Subcommittee

How Would You Respond to a Negative Review?

The January 2016 Practice Perfect discussed some of the pitfalls of social media, including negative online reviews. Frustrated by the inordinate power a single negative Yelp review has had on my practice, for years I ignored the negative review and did not respond. But that is not fair to me as a competent physician and as a caregiver. At my core, I simply want to help the most people the best way possible.

The review accused me of delegating all of my patient care responsibilities to my physician's assistant. Rather than respond directly, which would surely involve privacy violations, I chose a high-road approach that is simply irrefutable (below). I suggest that others who are the victims of out-of-context negative online reviews consider this response:

Dear Prospective Patient:

Please do not let the review of a single disgruntled individual on Yelp influence your decision to seek attention from the Helm Eye Center. Rather, do as I recommend to all patients who are moving away from our area and ask whom to see for eye care in their new city. I tell them to ask a friend who lives there who their primary care physician (PCP) is, then ask the

PCP whom they would recommend for an eye doctor. The PCPs know the doctor's work intimately. They would hesitate to recommend a doctor that they do not know and trust.

If you would like a recommendation in Steamboat Springs, Colo., I suggest that you contact Yampa Valley Medicine at 970-879-3327 or Steamboat Medical Group at 970-879-0203. The Emergency Department at Yampa Valley Medical Center (970-879-1040) or any other physician in Steamboat Springs would also give recommendations.

Since I opened my practice in 1992, I have taken care of tens of thousands of patients and performed over 7,500 successful surgical procedures. All patients are treated in a kind, compassionate, caring manner, with the highest technology available. My staff and I treat all patients like family—because in essence you truly are. Thank you for your trust.

*Mark L. Helm, MD
Steamboat Springs, Colo.*

In-Flight Emergency

As someone with a lot of air miles under his belt, I read the January Clinical Update "Prepare for In-Flight Medical Emergencies" with great interest.

I have been on a number of flights where the crew has asked for medical assistance. I usually wait to respond, but then offer assistance. The last time when I came to help, an ICU nurse was already talking with the patient and I—partly joking and partly seriously—told her that she could probably handle this better than I. We both took over care of the patient and gave him oxygen. Because our patient was not in need of cardiac or respiratory assistance, we told the flight attendants we would watch him for the next hour of our flight but that they should advise the pilots to have EMTs available at the gate when we arrived at the Sea-Tac airport.

Everyone remained calm and seated until the patient was taken off the plane. Nothing heroic was needed except to keep people calm. The airlines and passengers were happy to avoid the cost and inconvenience of an emergency landing.

I know ophthalmologists who carry small bags with instruments and have come to the aid of patients on trans-Atlantic flights. Don't expect thanks from the airline, though—I didn't receive any. (Though I do still treasure the look on the flight attendant's face after our initial conversation. When I stood up to help, she asked me if I was a real doctor. I couldn't help myself and said, "No, but I play one on TV," as I handed her my emeritus professor business card from the University of Iowa.) We are, after all, EyeM.D.s.

*Thomas A. Weingeist, MD, PhD
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